SELECTED STATEMENTS ON VIETNAM

BY DoD AND OTHER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

January 1 - June 30, 1969

(Includes excerpts from speeches, press conferences, Congressional statements, and magazine articles)

Prepared by

Research & Analysis Division,

SAFAA
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Any prudent commander -- to reduce his own losses -- uses firepower rather than manpower to destroy the enemy. Also, he uses mobility to shift his troops strategically throughout the country and tactically throughout the battlefield. This we did. The fruits of our technology made possible the substitution of machines for men.

Intelligence estimates had indicated that we were opposed by approximately 232,000 enemy troops. As an example of how our machines saved men, you will recall how the British in Malaya found that it required 10 regular soldiers to defeat each insurgent. Had we used the British formula in South Vietnam, it would have required nearly two and a half million men to counter the communist threat. Thanks to our superior mobility and firepower, we needed only about 60 percent of that number -- a total combined force (U.S., Vietnamese and Free World Allies) of approximately 1.5 million men.

Our helicopters have allowed us to wage multi-dimensional warfare never before seen on the battlefield. The helicopter has permitted us to develop a mobile posture which not only has given us greater security against organized attack, but also has given us a reaction capability. We can reinforce units in contact with the enemy in a matter of minutes.
Well, it wasn't too many years ago that Marines were carrying 75MM pack howitzers and 4.2-inch mortars as external loads slung beneath helicopters. We picked them up from amphibious assault ships off-shore and carried them inland.

Today we have helicopters with greatly increased lift capability over those of only several years ago, so we can lift larger loads and heavier guns into the mountains where we locate those fire support bases. Now, instead of 75MM howitzers, we carry 105MM howitzers to those bases.

These bases, in fact, have become inland beachheads. We use preparatory fires prior to the landings, and fixed wing aircraft sweep the flanks in support of the landing force. And as Marines move out of the landing zone in combat operations, resupply is begun by helicopters carrying supplies from the support areas in the rear--to the "beachhead" units.

Because the ground commander is not tied to an overland supply route, he is free to maneuver against enemy forces without keying his tactics to protecting that route.

New tactics? Not from our standpoint. Just an application of our amphibious assault techniques to an inland war situation.
AIR OPERATIONS - Air-to-Air Combat

NAME: Dr. Robert C. Seams, Secretary of the Air Force
OCCASION: Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee
DATE: April 16, 1969

The U.S. margin of air superiority in air-to-air combat during the Korean War was approximately 12-to-1. However, since that time it has become extremely narrow, and often dependent upon the skill and experience of our pilots. In the air war over North Vietnam this superiority gradually declined from about 3-to-1 until finally, with improved North Vietnam ground radar control, it was less than 1-to-1 shortly before the bombing halt.

NAME: Dr. John S. Foster, Jr., Director, Defense Research and Engineering
OCCASION: Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services
DATE: April 30, 1969

During air operations over NVN in 1967 we commanded a 5:1 aircraft kill ratio in air-to-air engagements. In FY 68, the NVN cut our advantage by destroying 26 U.S. aircraft, while losing 31 of their own. FY 70 plans include engineering development of gun systems optimized for air-to-air combat and a family of improved 20mm rounds characterized by increased mass, size and impact energy.
Although the B-52 airplane was conceived and developed as a strategic weapon, it has been one of our most valuable tactical assets. The firepower delivered by a flight of B-52's is awesome. A single plane can deliver 108-500 and 750 pound bombs—having a total weight over 30 tons. A unique feature of the B-52 has been its ability to saturate an area with firepower.

B-52 strikes play a major role in the battle for South Vietnam. We use them to keep the enemy off balance, destroy known targets, and support our ground troops. They have pre-empted many enemy attacks and have saved thousands of American lives by supporting the Infantry soldier on the ground. When we did not have the troops to engage a located enemy force, we attempted to neutralize the threat with B-52 strikes.

The increase of $25 million in FY 1969 and $77 million in FY 1970 requested for B-52 sorties is required to support the additional flying time associated with the maintenance of the current high monthly rate through June 1970. The original FY 1970 Budget was based on a lesser number of sorties per month beginning in January 1969. We have actually been flying the current high rate since March 1968, and General Abrams has strongly recommended that this rate be continued. As you know, he considers the B-52 to be one of his most important weapons. On the basis of my own observations, I have concluded that funding for the current rate through June 1970 should be provided.
NAME: Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Interview by the Press Following Appearance before the House Armed Services Committee
DATE: April 1, 1969

Question: Mr. Secretary, it is a cutback in the B-52 sorties. What you are requesting, however, is still a cutback; is that not correct?

Secretary Laird: It is the same sortie figure that was in the original budget, but this sortie figure took effect on January 1, and since I've been Secretary of Defense I've maintained the sortie rate at 1,800 although the supplemental budget request only had funds for 1,600. In the budget that was submitted by the Johnson Administration, by Secretary Clifford, as you know contained funds for only 1,600 sorties during Fiscal Year 1970, but did not include enough funds to finance that sortie rate.

Question: Mr. Secretary, in view of the fact that General Abrams, the American Commander in Vietnam, wants more sorties, aren't you endangering American soldiers' lives by giving him less than he wants?

Secretary Laird: Well, I can assure you that we are considering the safety of the American Service personnel in every way. We have budgetary considerations as far as the Department of Defense is concerned. This was considered by the last Administration, has been considered by us, but I feel confident that with the amount of ammunition that is needed to destroy significant targets and to protect American lives, that the 1,600 sortie rate, as far as B-52s, will be sufficient.

Question: Even though he wants more than that, sir?

Secretary Laird: Yes. There are certain decisions that we have to make in the Department of Defense in which we disagree with our military advisors, but we have civilian control in the Department of Defense and I have looked into this matter very carefully, and I feel that the 1,600 rate will be sufficient during Fiscal Year 1970. If it is not sufficient, if the war should heat up, I would have no reluctance to change my position, but as of today I believe the rate that was in the original budget is sufficient.
Mr. John Hart: Mr. Secretary, in making a 10% reduction in B-52 bombing raids in South Vietnam, you spoke of there being no additional risk that you could measure for the ground troops. Is one reason that you can say that that will be a reduction in ground action by U. S. troops, thereby reducing their risk?

Secretary Laird: No, I would like to make it clear in the budget that was originally submitted, the B-52 raids were cut back on April 1 of this year. What I have done is cut back the B-52 raids on July 1 of 1969. I've extended the 1800 sorties through the period of April, May and June, so it represents an increase in the original budget that was sent to the Congress. Now, this is in the O&M account and in the procurement account for ammunition, and when you look at those accounts I believe that we can budget on the basis of 1600 B-52 sorties without endangering the safety of any American or endangering the war effort. We're trying to do everything we can to reduce Defense spending.

Q: Is the cutback in the B-52 program in Vietnam proper?

A: Of course all decisions of this sort are a matter of judgment. General Abrams has been quick to point out that the 1,800 sorties that have been running for months, with the B-52s, are extremely important. At the same time he recognizes the problems of the budget and has agreed to go along with the smaller number -- the 1,600.
The B-52 continues to be a major factor, inflicting heavy casualties and damage to enemy capabilities. Allied field commanders in Vietnam have been unanimous in their praise of SAC's B-52 operations, and I take great pride in the numerous dispatches I receive from all levels of command attesting to the outstanding effectiveness of the B-52 effort. As an example, on October 15, 1968, General Abrams stated in a message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the B-52, as currently used, has the equivalent punching power of several ground divisions.

During the Tet offensive of early 1968 and the subsequent battle for Khe Sanh, we increased the B-52 sortie rate. The unqualified success of the increased B-52 sortie rate prompted U.S. commanders in Vietnam and the Pacific Command to request that the higher rate be continued. In addition to meeting that request we have significantly increased the flexibility of our B-52 operations and are now providing a strike force of B-52s at planned intervals, day and night. Also we have the capability to redesignate targets rapidly, thus providing increased responsiveness to the needs of the ground forces and time-sensitive intelligence reports. We have been able to maintain this increased sortie rate and operational flexibility primarily because the Royal Thai Air Base at U-Tapao has permitted more efficient use of our aircraft and aircrew resources. We are planning to employ a lower rate in FY 70 but will maintain the capability to return immediately to the higher sortie rate if this becomes necessary. We believe this use of strategic bombers in support of tactical situations will go down in history as one of the finest examples of the inherent flexibility of airpower.
The tremendous success of close air support at Khe Sanh is an outstanding example of lessons learned about the decisive role of close air support in ground force engagements. From January until the siege was broken at the end of March 1968, Air Force tactical fighters operated in precision teamwork with B-52 heavy bombers (and Navy and Marine attack aircraft) to provide massive air support for the beleaguered fort. Official reports indicate that upwards of 10,000 enemy personnel were killed by airpower. Cumulative evidence from all sources indicates that the enemy withdrawal without overrunning the base at Khe Sanh was directly related to the effectiveness of U.S. airpower.
"A complete assessment of the effects of the air campaign on North Vietnam is not possible due to the difficulty in determining the degree to which an interdiction campaign reduces and restricts the flow of men and materials to the ground combat theater. A major effect of the air strikes, however, has been to make it extremely difficult for the North to support the insurrection in the South. Thousands of vehicles and tons of supplies were damaged or destroyed while yet in the North, thus increasing the input requirements at the head of the pipelines. The air campaign degraded North Vietnamese capabilities to the extent that cessation of these attacks became the number-one concession sought by Hanoi as a prelude to negotiations in Paris.

"The bombing restrictions of last April limited U.S. air operations to the area below the 20th Parallel. Our air strikes were then directed primarily against military targets related to the movement of troops, supplies and enemy activities which constituted a threat to friendly forces. Naturally, the restrictions limited the degree to which we could achieve the objectives for the air campaign.

"During this reduced bombing period, that portion of North Vietnam no longer subject to bombing returned to a more normal level of economic activity. The North undertook projects to recuperate facilities in the bomb sanctuary, as any nation would do -- they restored inoperative factories and power plants -- repaired and reconstructed lines of communication -- and improved port facilities. Supplies moving south within the bomb-free area more than doubled and transit time was reduced significantly. Major logistic support centers were established -- flying activities increased -- air defenses were reconstituted -- previously abandoned airfields were reopened -- antiaircraft weapons and missile sites were increased.

"The complete termination of offensive operations against North Vietnam last November eliminated our capability to interdict the North in depth.

"Since that time, great quantities of supplies have moved unimpeded from the North toward South Vietnam. There are strong indications that infiltration of personnel also increased. The daily average number of trucks observed in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam has been more than five times the daily average sighted by pilots during the earlier period. Hundreds of heavy barges began operations all the way south to the DMZ. All evidence points to the fact that North Vietnam is making full use of the bombing halt to move men and materials south at an accelerated pace.

"With these as the facts, I will permit you to draw your own conclusions as to the value of the air campaign and to answer in your own minds the question, "How effective was the air war?"
Our interdiction campaign in SEAsia has been particularly effective. Even with the curtailment of bombing north of the 20th Parallel in March 1968, and the complete bombing halt in North Vietnam in November 1968, we have continued to impede enemy movements with a high degree of success. Our main objective, of course, was to reduce the enemy's war-fighting capabilities and thus prevent a general offensive in the northern provinces and possibly all of South Vietnam. We accomplished this objective by round-the-clock attacks against key interdiction points, thus forcing the traffic into the more vulnerable areas. This also resulted in the congestion of trucks and materiel, making our armed reconnaissance more lucrative.

Selected choke points located at river crossings or in narrow passes were continually monitored. B-52 strikes, as well as fighter drops in formation under ground radar control, were used very effectively against designated targets. Photo reconnaissance plus visual observations by Strike Control and Reconnaissance (SCAR) pilots were exploited to obtain identification of new target areas and bomb damage assessment. Part of the strike force was used primarily against designated interdiction points, ferries, and other lucrative targets of opportunity, while the remainder operated against targets of opportunity in a truck killing role and against traffic backed up in the vicinity of the interdicted choke points.

The results of the interdiction efforts are impressive. Overall sightings of trucks, personnel, and supplies declined markedly in the first two months after the summer interdiction campaign began in July. Daily logistics flow immediately north of the demilitarized zone was reduced considerably from what it was before the campaign began. In this almost classic application of airpower, we see the ingredients for success: clearly defined objectives, a practical focus for a sustained attack, and highly effective integration and fusion of all sources of intelligence.
AIR OPERATIONS - Losses

NAME: General William C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: West Point Society of New York, University Club of New York
DATE: March 8, 1969

Indeed, the helicopter has proven its worth and survivability on the battlefield. I might add that our helicopter losses have been running less than anticipated. In fact, on the average, we have lost only one helicopter for every 26,000 sorties. Expressed another way: we have lost only one helicopter in each 9,500 flying hours in Vietnam.

NAME: Dr. John S. Foster, Director, DDR&E
OCCASION: Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services
DATE: April 30, 1969

From 1965 through 1968 we have lost 117 aircraft to surface-to-air missiles. Losses peaked in 1967 at 60 and dropped in 1968 to 12. Actually, the SAM effectiveness ratio -- SAM's fired to U.S. aircraft downed -- has gradually improved. We did degrade the SAM threat through effective employment of electronic countermeasures equipment, EW aircraft, and tactics.
With respect to your remarks concerning alleged B-52 bombing in North Viet-Nam, no B-52's have been targeted against North Viet-Nam since an attack on military targets in the DMZ on October 28, 1968. In answer to allegations raised since that date, a spokesman from the U.S. Department of Defense stated on January 27: "That is not true. We have not resumed the bombing of North Viet-Nam."

As to reconnaissance -- limited aerial reconnaissance, which is not an action involving the use of force, is being carried out over North Viet-Nam to assure that allied forces in South Viet-Nam are not faced with imminent danger of military actions from the armed forces of North Viet-Nam. That reconnaissance does not threaten the security of North Viet-Nam. The only action which has been taken in North Viet-Nam by the United States has been to defend our reconnaissance planes and pilots when they have been fired upon.

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Question: Mr. Secretary, in light of President Nixon's desire to reduce the credibility gap, I wonder if you would comment in all candor about how long, in fact, the U.S. has been bombing Laos?

Secretary Laird: The United States sends reconnaissance missions into Laos and these reconnaissance missions are escorted by armed aircraft, and this is the operation that we have conducted in Laos.
Nowhere has the mobility, flexibility, and responsiveness of tactical airlift been demonstrated more dramatically than in South Vietnam where virtually all aspects of this role are carried out daily. At Khe Sanh, for example, continual resupply was accomplished by airland operations until increased rocket and mortar attacks prevented further C-130 and C-123 landings. Then C-130 aircraft began to resupply the Marines by accurately airdropping loads of up to 36,000 pounds. Many drops were made in extremely poor weather, using ground radar to position the aircraft over the drop zone.
Other Free World Forces in South Vietnam

With the exception of the Philippines and New Zealand, all our allies increased their forces somewhat during the past year. In aggregate there are now 65,800 non-U.S. Free World military personnel in South Vietnam as compared with 60,000 a year ago. South Korea, with a strength of 50,000, has furnished two divisions and one brigade -- a total of 22 infantry-type battalions. Australia, with a present strength of 7,700, has furnished three infantry battalions, a squadron of eight attack bombers and a guided missile destroyer. Thailand, with a present force of 6,000 men in three maneuver battalions, will nearly double its commitment in January 1969. New Zealand continues to maintain a strength of 500 men and the Philippine reinforced construction battalion has been reduced from about 2,000 to 1,600 men.
NAME: Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Remarks to the Wisconsin Broadcasters' Association
DATE: February 25, 1969

For the last four years the United States has been tied down in a bloody, jungle war in Southeast Asia, where tonight we have over 547,000 of the finest citizens of America. This war has cost us dearly from the standpoint of casualties on the battlefield. It is running at the rate right now of over 200 American lives a week. In the last 48 hours, we have lost over 175 Americans in Southeast Asia. This is the greatest cost of this war, the casualties that have been suffered by America's young men who have been assigned to this responsibility.

NAME: William C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, USA
OCCASION: Statement before the Committee on Armed Services, US Senate
DATE: March 25, 1969

After all, 12,700 American servicemen died during the two years of Korean truce negotiations. And more than 6,000 Army men have been killed in Vietnam since the Paris talks began.
Since the summer of 1965, III MAF units have supported over 91,674 students in various activities; and the III MAF scholarship fund last year provided funds for more than 4,400 deserving and needy Vietnamese students to attend schools in I Corps.

But that's rather a dry statistic - not a sensational development.

Here are some other statistics:

During 1968, III MAF units sponsored construction of 91 schools and conducted 8,795 English language courses.

During 1968, more than 3,500 persons received medical aid training from Navy and Marine Corps personnel in III MAF areas. Since 1965, more than 7,600 persons have been trained.

In addition, since 1965, over 4 million people have been given dental or medical treatment, 384,000 pounds of clothing have been distributed, 14,866 critically ill civilians have been evacuated, and 3,578 construction projects have been completed.
NAME: Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Remarks to the Wisconsin Broadcasters' Association
DATE: February 25, 1969

we have invested over $30 billion a year. And this investment has drained the American taxpayer. It has been a tremendous load as far as our country is concerned. Eighty per cent of the support in Southeast Asia in the Vietnamese war as far as North Vietnam is concerned has been provided by the Soviet Union. And this 80 per cent support in terms of dollars and cents amounts to a little over a billion and a half to the Soviet Union.

But it has forced the United States to make tremendous sacrifices not only as far as our young men are concerned, but it has forced us to invest this $30 billion a year, while the Soviet Union was able to go forward with an ever-increasing buildup in the field of strategic offensive and defensive weapons during this last 36 months.

NAME: Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: News Conference at Danang Air Base, South Vietnam
DATE: March 9, 1969

Question: Well, will the Vietnam budget exceed 23--do you expect the Vietnam allocation for Fiscal '70 to exceed $23 billion?

Secretary Laird: The total Vietnam allocation?

Question: Yes, you said it was 23 last year.

Secretary Laird: No, last year it was a little over 29. As a matter of fact, they underestimated the costs last year in the budget submission by some $5 billion, and this was made up through reprogramming. The additional $5 billion was made up by $2-1/2 billion in reprogramming and $2-1/2 billion in supplemental appropriation. Now, as far as the war level of spending in Fiscal Year 1970, we undoubtedly will have some amendments to propose to the budget on the 18th of March, but I will outline those amendments before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the 18th of March, and I won't outline those amendments here in South Vietnam.

Question: I understand. Will the total, do you believe--do you anticipate the total will exceed 29? In other words, will it cost more next year than last?

Secretary Laird: No, it will not.
Our experiences there, particularly with helicopter-provided air mobility and tactical intelligence systems, undoubtedly have wide applicability and should serve as a springboard for the future. Of equal importance are the lessons we have learned as a result of our advisory and pacification efforts. Helping to insure a climate of order within which responsible government can function efficiently was a challenging mission for the Army, and our performance improved significantly with experience. But here we must be careful not to accept our Vietnam experiences as being totally applicable in future conflicts in which the environment and national purposes may be as strange to us as those we faced in Southeast Asia in 1965. We must be selective in our application of the lessons we have learned in Vietnam.
LESSONS LEARNED

NAME: Dr. John S. Foster, Jr., Director, Defense Research and Engineering

OCCASION: Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services

DATE: April 30, 1969

The war has revealed our weaknesses in many areas -- starkly, for example, in our inability to find and hit small, concealed, fixed or mobile targets.

Another area in which we are learning important combat lessons is electronic warfare, especially against the Soviet-supplied air defense weapons. It is essential that, despite the awful price of the war, we learn from this "disclosure" of Soviet strengths and this identification of key U.S. gaps. The hard-earned lessons will pay off in improving our entire tactical forces long after the Vietnam conflict has ended.

NAME: Dr. John S. Foster, Jr., Director, Defense Research and Engineering

OCCASION: Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services

DATE: April 30, 1969

There is no question about the clear payoffs from this part of our program. Recent results of R&D have improved our forces' effectiveness in the field -- and there are many examples of these payoffs. Just as important, we have learned lessons in Vietnam combat that will lead to significant improvements in our general military capabilities for many years. Nevertheless, we have also learned that advanced technology is probably not the decisive factor in this kind of war.
Our Armed Forces are instruments of our national policy. As such, our military force -- Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard -- acting in concert with other Free World forces, have accomplished a great deal in Vietnam:

They have prevented South Vietnam from being militarily overrun by Hanoi.

They have provided a shield behind which the South Vietnamese people have begun to build a democratic nation in accordance with their own desires.

They have gained time for South Vietnam to build its armed forces to a point where, now, it gradually assumes a greater portion of the fighting burden.

Moreover, this union of military force and political policy has enabled the South Vietnamese to:

Mobilize their manpower . . .

Galvanize their collective will . . . and,

Help stabilize their economy.

Finally, our military power -- properly applied -- created the conditions necessary to bring the enemy to the conference table.
MEASURE OF PROGRESS - Military

NAME: Clark M. Clifford, Secretary of Defense
DATE: January 15, 1969

There have been significant advances and there remain significant problems in the military situation, the pacification efforts, the improvement of South Vietnamese forces, and the political evolution of the country.

Hanoi's presence at the Paris conference table is solid evidence of allied military improvement: the North Vietnamese decision to negotiate while fighting testifies to their increasingly heavy casualties, the staying power of allied forces, and Hanoi's recognition that it cannot gain its objectives by force. Effective allied tactics have served to disrupt Communist plans and logistic systems in SVN -- in 1968 the enemy lost weapons and munitions at about twice the 1967 rate, and substantial materiel caches were captured. Our adversary is now less willing to attack and sustain the losses he has been taking. His most grievous loss has probably been that of experienced Viet Cong troops. Reduced pressure around the DMZ has allowed us to redeploy one division southward. We are practicing effective patrolling and defense-in-depth of populated areas.

These hopeful elements run up against other, more somber facts, which undercut the thesis that the enemy is being forced to negotiate from weakness. Despite severe losses, the enemy still retains the capability to launch further offensives, and his infiltration potential remains great.

In short, while we now cannot lose militarily, neither is total military victory within our grasp. That is why we are in Paris. That is also why the enemy is in Paris. Each side hopes to pursue its objectives at lower costs.
there is now reason to believe that, in some measure, we have succeeded in shifting the focus of confrontation in Vietnam from the arena of the battlefield to that of the conference chamber. We have forced the enemy to the realization that, though he can still inflict great injury and misery on the people of South Vietnam, he is incapable of winning a military victory and, moreover, his capability is declining with the passage of time and the growing strength of our Vietnamese allies.

We can -- and should -- now move explicitly toward a reduction in the level of conflict, and toward the mutual reduction -- and the eventual elimination -- of outside forces from South Vietnam. Last year we began the process of turning over to the Government of Vietnam more responsibility for the conduct of the war. This year the process should continue and, I hope, accelerate. But we must not delude ourselves that the shift of emphasis from battlefield to conference table means that the war is won, or that there will not be difficult days ahead. We have already seen how difficult it is simply to get negotiations started. We know that all the parties have much at stake which they will not lightly concede. But I think that we have now set a true course toward peace in Vietnam.
QUESTION: No, how you view the military situation in Vietnam since you have taken office?

SECRETARY LAIRD: No, I don't believe that I would care to give an overall view as far as the military situation is concerned. If you mean how are we getting along at the present time, I believe that we must continue to protect the American service personnel that are stationed in Vietnam all during these Paris talks, every effort is being made to keep sufficient pressure on the enemy so that our service personnel in Vietnam will not be overrun.

I plan to go to Vietnam in the not too distant future, as I told you at our first press conference. I do feel that the military situation, however, has improved somewhat in Vietnam during the last 12 months, and certainly the forces of the South Vietnamese Government have improved in the last year.

I think we can look for more improvement, however, in these forces, and every effort will be made to see that the forces of the South Vietnamese Government are improved and are able to bear more of the load in that area of the world.

OCCASION: Luncheon Address: Salesmen's Assn of the Paper Industry, NY

DATE: February 18, 1969

Allied operations during the first five months of 1968 were characterized by vigorous reactions to enemy initiatives. During the last seven months of the year, we took the initiative and conducted intensive and relentless ground, air and naval attacks against the enemy's efforts to rebuild his forces and threaten Allied installations in South Vietnam. Our operations drove a substantial portion of his elements to areas outside of SVN -- shattered his main forces -- and enabled friendly units to achieve a dominant military posture in the South.

The success of Allied military operations significantly assisted the Government in its efforts to enhance the security of the population and to support the Government's political and economic programs.

As I mentioned earlier, during the past year, the enemy conducted three major offensives. Each resulted in a more serious military setback than the preceding one. Please note that the enemy's third and final offensive in August 1968 was defeated even before he arrived at his objective -- the population centers. This was accomplished because the Allied forces were able to detect and to defeat him, away from the urban areas. We thus dealt him not only a strong military blow, but likewise a notable psychological defeat, which in large measure offset the temporary psychological gains realized by the enemy during the initial stages of the Tet offensive in early 1968.

As the year ended, even the enemy's once safe base areas in South Vietnam were being penetrated and, in some instances, even occupied by Allied forces. Last year the Allied forces captured almost 60,000 enemy weapons, killed more than 180,000 of their troops and destroyed hundreds of tons of rice and ammunition. These losses resulted in enemy shortages of other vital supplies as well. As one example, medical materials were in very short supply and his wounded suffered for the lack of proper care. Because of the success of our operations which led to these shortages, we have strong indications that the enemy is facing a serious morale problem and his confidence in victory is being seriously eroded.
In addition to containing the current enemy offensive, allied military efforts are reported to be making steady progress. For example, during my recent trip to Vietnam, both General Cushman and General Stilwell cited significant advances in I Corps in eliminating enemy influence, including the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI). General Cushman, however, informed me that an additional two years would be required before he could see the situation as being satisfactorily in hand. It is apparent that a successful anti-infrastructure effort will thus require a substantially higher enemy rate of attrition than has yet been realized.

I am convinced that, barring Chinese Communist intervention, the enemy has no prospects of military victory in Vietnam. Nor can he achieve military successes of such significance as to affect the outcome of the Paris negotiations. This is not to say that he will not attempt to achieve military victories; I expect him to do so. But I am confident that the Army, together with the other services and our allies, will meet successfully any challenges he may make.
MEASURE OF PROGRESS - Military

NAME: William P. Rogers, Secretary of State
OCCASION: The Associated Press Annual Luncheon, New York
DATE: April 21, 1969

The South Vietnamese, together with the five allies who responded to their appeal for help, have denied the North Vietnamese Communists the military victory they were seeking. Together we have safeguarded the right of the people in the South to make their own decisions.

The leaders in Hanoi know that they cannot win by military means. That is why there is a new sense of self-confidence in South Viet-Nam.

And that is why we can now be deeply engaged -- as we are -- in an intensive program of upgrading the equipment and combat capability of the armed forces of the Republic of Viet-Nam -- so they are able to take over an ever-larger measure of their own defense.

I want to emphasize that this is something that the leaders of South Viet-Nam very much want -- and have so stated publicly and privately.

This, of course, is what we want too.

The readiness of replacement forces, the level of offensive actions by the enemy, or progress in the Paris peace talks will determine the scope and timing of actual transfers of responsibility -- and the consequent release of our forces.
MEASURE OF PROGRESS - Military

NAME: Dr. John S. Foster Jr., Director, Defense Research and Engineering
OCCASION: Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services
DATE: April 30, 1969

we appear finally to be reaching the point where the NVN main forces are being defeated, and where territorial security is being established over an increasing area. Local VC bases, inviolate for years, are being rooted out. The work of finding and eliminating the enemy infrastructure is beginning to get under way. The Government of South Vietnam can now begin to establish its political system and economic infrastructure firmly in the villages. And they appear to be making some progress.

NAME: General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., Commandant, USMC
OCCASION: Remarks before the San Diego Council of the Navy League
DATE: June 23, 1969

WITHIN THE BORDERS OF SOUTH VIETNAM, WE CONTINUE TO KEEP THE ENEMY'S MAIN FORCE UNITS AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE, AND GENERALLY OUT OF THE COUNTRY. WE HAVE MADE GREAT PROGRESS IN ROOTING OUT THE GUERRILLAS, AND THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE. IT IS A FACT THAT LOCAL VIET CONG UNITS, AS SUCH, HAVE ALL BUT CEASED TO EXIST. WE FIND MORE AND MORE THAT THESE GUERRILLA UNITS REMAIN VIET CONG IN NAME ONLY, AND ARE ACTUALLY CADRED, AND FILLED OUT WITH REGULAR NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS AND SPECIALISTS. THE FEW SOUTH VIETNAMESE LEFT IN THESE FORMATIONS ARE CAREFULLY INTEGRATED WITH THE PEOPLE FROM THE NORTH, WATCHED CLOSELY, AND CAN HARDLY BE CLASSIFIED AS POLITICAL ZEALOTS.

WE ALSO NOTE THAT REPEATED ACTS OF TERROR BY THE ENEMY SEEM TO HAVE REACHED THEIR MAXIMUM VALUE IN COERCION. RATHER THAN SUBMIT TO ENEMY CONTROL, THE RURAL VIETNAMESE PEOPLE ARE TURNING TO A STRENGTHENED GOVERNMENT. AND LET THERE BE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT -- THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IS STRONGER. AND AS THE ENEMY CONTINUES TO APPLY PRESSURE, AND MORE VIETNAMESE FROM THE RURAL AREAS TURN TO THE GOVERNMENT, IT GATHERS EVEN GREATER STRENGTH. THAT IS THE REAL HEART OF THIS WAR.
...let me briefly tell you what I think is the meaning of the meeting that we had in Midway.

First, that meeting brought home the message that the forces of South Vietnam have now been trained and equipped to the point that they are able to take over a substantial portion of combat activities presently being borne by Americans.

Second, that meeting means that President Thieu completely approves and supports the eight-point peace program which I set forth in my May 18 (May 14) speech to the Nation. There is no disagreement between us on that program.

And, third, that meeting means that after five years in which more and more Americans have been sent to Vietnam, we finally have reached the point where we can begin to bring Americans home from Vietnam.

This does not mean that the war is over. There are negotiations still to be undertaken. There is fighting still to be borne until we reach the point that we can have peace.
Progress is being made in most phases of the pacification program but there are no signs of an early breakthrough. The February 1968 Tet offensive dealt severe blows to the program, but the enemy suffered heavy casualties, the RVNAF generally fought well, the GVN carried out relief activities efficiently, and the massive defections or popular demonstrations for the enemy cause that the Communists anticipated failed to materialize. Since March, the percentage of population living in relatively secure areas has steadily increased and the GVN has now improved upon pre-Tet security levels. An Accelerated Pacification Campaign to upgrade the security standards of 1,000 hamlets by Tet 1969 began on 1 November and is making good progress. Indeed, the goal was subsequently increased to 1,263. The rate of Chieu Hoi ralliers to the GVN increased significantly during the past months, but due to the Tet offensive, 1969 totals fell considerably short of those of 1967. Despite hopeful elements, however, major problems traditionally confronting the pacification program remain.

"What is this pacification program, what are some of its elements, and how are we doing?"

As pointed out earlier, 1968 was a year of contrast; from a virtual halt, following the shock of the February (Tet) enemy attacks, concerted pacification efforts were accelerated to a new high by the close of the year.

The overall pacification objective in South Vietnam is to extend the effective presence of the South Vietnamese government over the entire countryside. We realized modest gains during earlier pacification programs, many of which were erased with the onset of the Tet offensive last February. These gains were dramatically recovered, however, through South Vietnamese leadership -- Allied military successes -- and the implementation of several key pacification programs. I might mention a few of these projects to show the magnitude of this effort.

Project Recovery is one of these programs. Initiated shortly after the Tet offensive as an emergency effort, it proved highly successful in providing care for the homeless and food for the populace. Damaged cities and towns were rebuilt, thus stimulating popular support for the Government of South Vietnam. "Recovery" was an important factor in the defeat of the Tet uprising objective.
Another is a three-month accelerated pacification campaign. Launched last November, it exploited the enemy's military weaknesses and spoiled his efforts to win by political means what he could not win militarily. This across-the-board campaign involved military spoiling operations -- a concentrated attack on the Viet Cong political structure -- and devoted greater attention to the people's self-defense needs.

A third project is the Government of South Vietnam's Phoenix Program, designed to eliminate the Viet Cong political structure. By December, "Phoenix" committees and permanent staffs had been established at Saigon, in most of the provinces, and in three of the autonomous cities. Strengthened by President Thieu's personal interest and in conjunction with the accelerated pacification campaign, the goal to eliminate 1,000 enemy infrastructure personnel per month has been raised to 3,000. Preliminary data indicates that this goal will be achieved.

NAME: Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense
OCCASION: Statement before the Senate Committee on Armed Services; Amendments to the FY 1969 Supplemental and FY 1970 Defense Budget
DATE: March 19, 1969

In the IV Corps area as well, the military situation is steadily moving in a direction favorable to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and the United States. However, Major General Eckhart, the senior U.S. Military Advisor in IV Corps, recognizes that the pacification effort is proceeding slowly in this traditional VC stronghold.

The basic problem remains that of achieving permanent South Vietnamese governmental control over the country. Although Ambassador Bunker gives persuasive documentation of steady political growth by the Government of South Vietnam, this progress is difficult to translate into nationwide security. Even greater national exertion will be necessary to bring GVN administration and political structures into the villages and hamlets of South Vietnam. This would be an extremely difficult task under peaceful circumstances; it is monumental while hostilities continue at the present level.
Pacification efforts were set back about 6 months by the enemy's general offensives during early 1968. The Government of South Vietnam moved aggressively to counteract this adverse impact, and by last fall commendable progress was again being made in the pacification program. Precise measurement of this progress is difficult. However, one criterion of progress is the number of Vietnamese living in relatively secure areas -- that is, those areas with a sufficient level of security that the enemy cannot operate freely in them and where reasonably normal social and economic activity is possible. Figures provided by the South Vietnamese reveal that in early 1965 only 45 per cent of the South Vietnamese population lived in relatively secure areas. At the end of 1968 the figure, by our count, had risen to over 75 per cent. These statistics certainly reflect a most encouraging trend.
The American soldier in Vietnam today receives medical care far better than that available in any previous war. We are saving almost 98 percent of those hospitalized in Vietnam, and more of the seriously wounded men are reaching medical facilities in time than was ever possible in the past. This result is attributable not only to the capability of our medical personnel and equipment, but also to the effectiveness of our helicopter evacuation system.
I want to tell you that all of us can be proud of the way the Marines—and the American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and coast guardsmen—have continued their efforts in Vietnam in this period of negotiations.

They are acutely aware of the peace talks—not the minutia or the details of the negotiations—but they are aware of the general nature and purpose.

But they have not lessened their efforts in any discernible way.

They are still trying hard, trying to achieve the objectives we sent them there to achieve.

Since the summer of 1965, more than 30,000 Marines have voluntarily extended their tours of duty in Vietnam for at least another six months, about one battalion per month. This last December, of 8,000 Marines scheduled to come home, 3,200 extended their tours.
I have watched members of our Armed Forces at many of our military installations in this country and all over the world, and I have met and talked with thousands of them in the combat zone during my frequent visits to Southeast Asia.

I can best summarize my impressions of them by saying that the professionalism, ingenuity and dedication of today's military men are unmatched in the history of the world. They truly represent our "ultimate weapon," and this is the one weapon on which we can always rely in safeguarding the security of this country.

The record in Vietnam speaks for itself, and those of us who have had the opportunity to see our young soldiers in action there must certainly feel a sense of pride in the tremendous job they are doing in the face of sacrifice, hardship, and danger.

We should also be greatly heartened by the skill and professional competence demonstrated by our military leaders in conducting with restraint a limited and protracted war not supported by all segments of the American public.
In Vietnam, which I hope to visit soon, our sailors and Marines are upholding the finest traditions of courage, ingenuity, and spirit. In the past year, 12,590 Marines and 5107 sailors have volunteered to remain on for additional time in-country because they believe in what they are doing.

It is really incredible to think of some of the responsibilities born by our personnel. A 23 year old is hot rodding in and around the air spaces in South Vietnam at more than twice the speed of sound in a go-machine that costs $3 million. Lives of others depend directly and indirectly on how well he flies his mission. An electronics technician has the job of maintaining all the sophisticated electronics and communications equipment in a destroyer. And where can you match the responsibility given a young officer who is the officer-of-the-deck of a ship in a complicated formation? He not only has the safety of the ship in his hands, but the very lives of all aboard.
I would like to add a personal word based on many visits to South Vietnam over the past five years. This is the most difficult war in America's history, fought against a ruthless enemy. I am proud of our men who have carried the terrible burden of this war with dignity and courage, despite the division and opposition to the war in the United States. History will record that never have America's fighting men fought more bravely for more unselfish goals than our men in Vietnam. It is our responsibility to see that they have not fought in vain.

There is so much talk about the faults and weaknesses of our youth. I wonder why people talk so little about our men in Vietnam whose heroism and dedication are unsurpassed. During my numerous visits to Southeast Asia, I have met literally thousands of them, and I was filled with great pride and confidence in the future for they represent the real youth of this country.
NAME: Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations
OCCASION: The Navy League Awards Luncheon, Washington, DC
DATE: May 22, 1969

Some weeks ago, we saw much about the number of servicemen who chose to absent themselves in the course of a year without authority to do so. What emerged was a sensational disclosure that, in effect, American military morale was suspect -- that the disenchantment resulting from Vietnam was infecting the Armed Forces.

No sensational disclosure was made, however, of the unclassified and available facts that:

-- Less than five per cent of United States servicemen ever go AWOL;
-- That 99.9 plus per cent of our men in uniform do not seek asylum in Sweden;
-- That since September 1965 to the present, some 47,000 Navymen have volunteered for duty in Vietnam;
-- That since September 1966, 10,000 Navymen stationed in Vietnam have voluntarily extended their tours there for six months or longer.
-- And that 33,000 of our incomparable Marines in Vietnam have done the same.
There is much talk everywhere today about all the things that are wrong with this country, especially about the faults and weaknesses of our youth. I wonder why there is not more talk about our young men in Vietnam whose heroism and dedication are unsurpassed. During my numerous visits to Southeast Asia, I have met literally thousands of them, and I have great confidence in the future, because I know they represent the real youth of this country.
Although we expended more than a million tons of air munitions in SEAsia in 1968, surpassing the previous year by 400,000 tons, our world-wide inventory continued a gradual gain. The expenditure increase was mainly attributable to the B-52 sorties which were more than double the number flown in 1967. We were able to pace those expenditures by once more expanding our flexible production base which is now producing approximately 100,000 tons per month for Air Force operations.

After the Pueblo incident in late January 1968, we diverted air munitions from the SEAsia pipeline and more than doubled the assets in Korea in a matter of days. This diversion had little impact on SEAsia as replacement shipments were established almost immediately.
The original FY 1970 Budget projected both consumption and production of air munitions at 110,000 tons per month from January 1969 through December 1970 (the end of the FY 1970 procurement leadtime). Included in the projected consumption rate were the lower number of B-52 sorties.

Actual consumption is now running at about 129,000 tons per month (including the higher number of B-52 sorties) and we have maintained production at about that same rate. Since we see no indication that consumption will decline during the next 12-18 months, we believe it would be prudent to maintain production at the current rate, i.e., 129,000 tons per month, at least through June 1970. At that point our worldwide inventory would be very substantial, when taken together with a "hot" production base. Accordingly, we believe we can plan on reducing air munitions production, beginning in July 1970, to the lowest sustaining rate -- about 52,500 tons per month -- from which we can readily expand it to the present rate within a period of 4-6 months.
The original FY 1970 Budget projected consumption at 105,000 tons per month through December 1970. Consumption in January of this year was 96,000 tons, and the assumption is made that it will continue to decline over the next year or so. For budget planning purposes we have assumed that consumption will average about 92,000 tons per month during the July 1969-March 1970 period, and then decline to 87,000 tons per month during the April 1970-December 1970 period.

Production of ground ammunition is now running at about 145,000 tons per month and we plan to maintain that rate through December 1969. Beginning in January 1970 -- if the foregoing estimates of consumption are borne out -- we plan to reduce production to about 80,000 tons per month and maintain that rate through December 1970 (the end of the FY 1970 procurement leadtime). Since projected consumption will exceed planned production in CY 1970, our worldwide inventory of ground munitions is expected to decline by about 100,000 tons by December 1970.
Consumption in November and December 1968 averaged about 2,600 tons per month, and that rate was projected through the FY 1970 procurement leadtime. Since December, consumption has declined to about 2,000 tons per month, which is the rate we now project through December 1970. To provide a margin of safety, we plan to reduce the production of ship gun ammunition to about 2,100 tons per month in CY 1970, with a savings of about $44 million.
NAME: General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., Commandant of the Marine Corps
OCCASION: Remarks at the Navy League Sea Power Symposium, Washington, DC
DATE: February 25, 1969

We've been able to employ amphibious assault practices in other areas closer to the coastline, too. We've combined ground operations against selected areas with landings from the sea to establish a cordon around the area.

These operations have been highly successful in helping us identify and separate the Viet Cong infrastructure and the Viet Cong guerrillas from the people inside the cordon.

After the cordon has been tightened, the Marine units have been re-embarked on board the amphibious assault ships of the 7th Fleet and have moved back to sea to strike again at another spot.

It is another example of the flexibility and mobility inherent in amphibious force doctrine as applied to the Vietnamese war.
Our naval forces continue to honor our commitment to the peoples of Southeast Asia with 78,000 men embarked in ships in support of operations in South Vietnam as well as the more than 118,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel who are ashore in South Vietnam.